

Rebel Loner Girl (& the Babysitter of The Year) by pendragonfics

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Summary:

You thought it would be a simple drop off for your sister to go to the Snow Ball, but when you have two options,

- a) sit in the car and read Will Buyers' Spider-Man comics, or
- b) catch a ride anywhere else with Steve Harrington --

it's kind of obvious which one you'll go for.

Rebel Loner Girl (& the Babysitter of The Year)

Author's Note:

This was a request from my tumblr, by an anonymous requester!

Your dad didn't want to do it alone. But then again, Chief Hopper was a man who never really got it his way, anyways. But you went along with it. Helped your newfound sister to look pretty, pick out a dress, and look decent enough to go to the Snow Ball. You remember when you were that young – heck, you'd almost skipped it, except that your dad all but made you go. So, after making El look presentable, you got into the car with your dad, and heard all the ground rules for her to follow for the dance.

"Remember, you're going to school here next year, so you can make friends then." He tells her, looking in the rear-view mirror of the police truck. "And don't get too close to boys – Mike in particular."

"*Dad*," you groan, rolling your eyes.

El nods. "Yeah, *Dad*," she joins in. "I won't be stupid."

He *harrumphs* at that, but reluctantly agrees. Soon enough, you make it to the school, and while you take a picture of your sister half-heartedly smiling, and usher her inside, you see as your dad gravitates to where Mrs. Buyers is by her car. But when El is inside the middle school's gym, you see that your dad is nowhere near the car, and the keys, unlike usually, aren't left in the ignition.

"Uh, sorry," you walk over to where he's talking with Mrs. Buyers, sharing a cigarette. "Aren't we going home? I have a paper I'm working on for biology."

Mrs. Buyers gives your dad a look. "Jim, I thought you told her." She half-scolds.

You square your jaw, crossing your arms. "Did you change plans without telling me?"

He flicks the butt of the cigarette onto the asphalt of the school parking lot, and crushes it under his boot. “Yeah, but I told you, last night, after dinner. You said, *yes dad.*”

You stare at him. “I thought you were telling me to clean up the dishes!”

Joy gives his arm a small thwack. “If you want, I think Will has one of his comic books in the back of my car, something like, uh, Spider-Man?”

You shake your head, shoving your hands into your jeans pockets. “Um, no thanks, Mrs. Buyers, I’ve already read those.” You look to your Dad, “Not cool,” you add. But just then, when you look across the parking lot, you see a familiar face. “I’m taking off. Bye!”

You wave a hasty goodbye to the adults, and book it across to where you see Steve Harrington with his fancy BWM. He’s dropping off Dustin Henderson, one of El’s friends, and before he can drive away, you place a hand on the bonnet, and probably scare the guy half to death.

“I need a lift.”

He raises an eyebrow at your beat-up jeans and wild hair. “I just finished being chauffer, Hopper,” he says, and after a beat, adds, “C’mon, get in. Where to?”

You don’t waste a second, practically racing to get to the empty left-hand side of the car. “Anywhere but here, Harrington,” you roll your eyes, “Are you picking up Dustin after, or was that just...”

He shakes his head. “Yeah, I’m doing his Mom a solid.” He puts the car into gear, and starts driving off. “And ‘*anywhere*?’” He asks, “What are you, some kind of rebel loner girl?”

You shrug, sitting lower in the seat so your knees touch the dashboard. “I don’t know. You tell me, demo-dog bait boy.” You glance over to the driver, and your classmate, and add, “Not going to lie, the last week? Hectic as hell. You really helped us with that shit, dickbrain.”

He laughs. “*I’m* the dickbrain?”

You nod. “Yeah.” Out the window, you see a sign for the local cafe, and point it out. “Turn here. I think I have twenty dollars and a need for terrible diner food.” You grin, and add, “My dad can’t cook for shit.”

Steve turns the car into the parking lot, and getting out, you realise the gravity of the situation. You, freak beyond compare, are hanging out with Steve Harrington, the Hawkins’s own Mr. Popular, at a diner while the kids are dancing to the MTV hits. But you don’t freak out over it. He might have just been ditched by Nancy Wheeler, and you’re *you* and the only person you’ve been with was Danny Welch in fourth grade, when he kissed you.

But before the pair of you walk into the diner, you stop him. “I just want to apologise for calling you dickbrain, Harrington. You’re not half bad, especially with the kids. You did, uh, some good.” You find it hard to compliment the guy you’ve just been laying it on thick to, and coughing into your fist, you add, “C’mon. I want waffles.”

You don’t see it, but Steve’s smiling. Well, not face-to-face, but you do, in the reflection of the diner’s glass door. But you don’t comment on it. Instead, you order waffles, and a tall vanilla milkshake and the same for Steve, before he can object. You select the booth, and you sit, pushing your sneakers on the seat opposite, beside Steve. He looks at the scuffed Converse shoes, and sits quietly for a second, car keys still in his hands, a band aid (not rainbow) on his forehead.

“I don’t get it, Hopper. You’re fine when your Dad and the kids are around, but when we’re alone, you’re moody, like at school.” He crosses his arms, “I don’t get it. You’re a funny person, _____. What changed?”

The waitress brings over two shakes, and two plates of waffles, with little bottles of maple syrup on the side, and silently, slides them in front of you both. You wait until she’s out of earshot, and making sure that nobody is prying, take a deep breath.

“He’s not my Dad.” You tell Steve.

He raises an eyebrow. “Wait, I thought you were, like, his daughter’s twin or something –,”

You laugh. “I’m the product of a drug addict and a shitty mother,” you grin, and tuck into your waffle, and with a mouthful, add, “I was in the foster system, years and years,” you swallow, and add, “I’m trailer park trash by birth.” *And you’re the town’s resident rich kid.*

He shakes his head. “Yeah, but you kicked ass, like, majorly. You took out at least three demo-dogs with your machete. Doesn’t matter that you’re adopted, you’re still awesome. Hell, bad to the bone.”

You crack a grin at that. “Not too bad yourself, Harrington.”

Steve’s got a mouthful now, and he says, “Can you teach me sometime that move you make, with the machete, when you,” he motions with his fork a figure-eight swinging motion, flicking syrup onto your shirt, “It’s epic. Where’d you learn it?”

You waggle your eyebrows. “My own design. Awesome, right?”

By the time the end of the Snow Ball rolls around, and the end of your waffles and shake, you’re back in the Hawkins Middle School’s parking lot with Steve Harrington, just in time for him to take Dustin home, and for you to get a ride home with your Dad and El, and hear all about it from her. But before you jet, you turn to him in the driver’s seat.

“Sorry I had a cow earlier,” you look at your hands, unable to hold his gaze, and add, “I guess shitty childhood equals shitty teenager.” You laugh. “It’s good that we could hang out, you know, when the world isn’t ending, for once?”

He nods. “Yeah, it was great.” There’s a noise outside, and the pair of you see the doors open, and tons of kids stream out from the school. “Maybe we could hang out again sometime?”

You pause. “Like, with other kids from school...?”

He shakes his head. “Nah, with you.”

There’s a knocking on the car window, and you turn to see Dustin

Henderson. His hair obviously has product in it, styling those curls a million times bigger, and he has a big smile on his face, showing off his new set of teeth. Before you can blink, or even tell him to stop pressing his face into the glass and to let you leave the car, he cries out, “Steve! You got a date with _____! Guys, I told you!”

You and Steve both shake your heads, but you pipe up, “Yeah, a date, *har-har*,” you laugh it off, and turning to Steve, you peck his cheek with a quick kiss, and add, “Yeah, I think it was. Why don’t you call sometime? I’d like that.”

As you leave, you go to your sister, and hear all about her night. But back in the car, Dustin’s already buckled in, and on the edge of his seat to hear more about what he just heard.

“So?” Dustin asks. “She’s so scary, but cool.”

Steve smiles to himself. “Yeah, she is,” he turns the key in the car. “C’mon, Henderson, let’s get you home.”

It’s about a week later, and for once, when 5:15PM rolls around, there’s the sound of tyres on the gravel driveway, and you and El race out to see your Dad pull into the yard of the house you all live in. It’s a rental, nice, a little squishy, but you don’t have to share a bedroom (a relic of your childhood as a foster-system kid), so it’s great. And it’s even greater, because coming into the house where you’re still watching the show *M*A*S*H**, is the scent of takeout pizza, and soda.

“You got cheese?” El asks, whisking the pizza box out of his hands, and into hers, “Yes! Best night ever!” She carries it to the lounge room, and begins eating it while sitting on the shag carpet.

You look to your dad, who hands you the soda, and tosses his keys into the dish by the door. “It’s been a busy couple of weeks since we got Will back,” he says, kicking off his boots, “We haven’t gotten to talk much.”

You shrug, carrying to soda to the kitchen to grab tumblers to drink from. “We talk enough, Dad,” you whine, “you know about my

grades, and my friends. Oh, Mrs. Gillespie called by earlier, she brought a basket of her oranges to say thank you. I didn't get what for, though..."

Your Dad, the amazing Chief Hopper puts a hand on your shoulder, interrupting your train of thought. "I didn't mean that kind of talk, Pebbles," he puts his gun and badge in the safe under the sink (a design so you two kids don't shoot each other, as well as kept where he can use them), and a hand on your shoulder. "I meant with you. You hear all about the crap that happens at my work, I'd like to hear about yours. Any new friends, or boys?" El laughs at a joke Klinger made on the TV in the next room, and you're silent. He adds, "What happened with you the night of the Snow Ball with you and John's kid, Steve?"

You make an exasperated noise. "Geez, pushy, much?" you complain.

Gathering the tumblers, take the soda to the loungeroom to grab what pizza you can before your sister devours the whole thing by herself. But instead of avoiding the topic, when you hand El her glass of soda pop, she pipes up, "Dustin told Mike and Mike told me that Dustin said he saw you kiss Steve Harrington," she parrots something out of the mouth of some prep, and adds, "He's cool."

Your Dad raises an eyebrow. "You kissed this kid?" He pushes a hand into his hairline, making it look like it's receding even more. "Can't believe my girls are growing up...do I need to give you the talk?"

You blanch. "Ew, no!"

As if on cue, the telephone on the wall rings, and grateful for an interruption, you take your slice of cheese pizza away from the conversation about your private life to the landline. "Hey, this is the Hopper house," you say.

"_____, it's Steve, from, uh, school. Harrington." he stammers, and you hear him groan on his end of the line. You glance around the corner, and see the advertisements between the television show playing, speaking about the politics going on in Washington D.C. "I hope I'm not interrupting anything."

You laugh. “No, you’re not interrupting,” you say, taking a bite of your slice of pizza, “What’s up? Don’t tell me. You want me to come on a secret mission to get all the Hawkins’ Middle School kids to know about that kiss.” Before he can say a word, you add, “It’s cool, don’t sweat it. I just don’t want people calling me a bimbette because you just broke up with Nancy.”

“Who cares what they think,” he says, “I liked it.”

You still, “Even though I’m a freak?” you ask.

There’s a small chuckle. “Freak or not, you’re still the bomb. If you’re not busy next Saturday, I got tickets to a drive-in movie, the new *Star Wars*? If you can’t, I get it –,”

“– sure, I’m free,” you pipe in, “Pick me up at five. I’ll bring pretzels, you bring soda. It’s so overpriced at the place,” you all but interrupt the guy, “Uh, see you at school?”

He agrees, and after saying goodbye, you hang the phone up. But it’s then you turn to see your Dad and little sister standing there, watching you adamantly from where the kitchen linoleum meets the loungeroom shag carpet. El’s hardly keeping her amused, yet excited smile from her face. Your Dad’s got his curious worry lines deepening by the second.

“Was that your boyfriend?” El asks.

You don’t groan. You don’t kick a fit. You don’t flip off your adopted family, you don’t lie. Instead –

“I’ve got a date with Steve Harrington,” you whisper. “Next Saturday.”

Author's Note:

You can find me on Tumblr on as @chaotic-lovely, and if you want to request a fic, check out [@pendragonfics!](#) ♀•?•♀